

Mindfulness and Equity: Natural Partners

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Fullerton College

FC Mindful Growth Initiative



FC Mindful Growth Initiative was developed in 2014 under the statewide 3CSN Habits of Mind Initiative which is aimed at addressing the affective domain in learning communities.

Mindful Growth: Mindfulness + Growth Mindset

It is an inclusive outreach program led by a collaborative group of faculty, staff, students, and administrators, supported by FC Staff Development.

FC Mindful Growth Initiative



Mission Statement:

The Mindful Growth Initiative fosters contemplative practices and growth opportunities to develop equity, student success, individual well-being, and community.

Campus Components:

- Workshops and Conferences
 - Student Ambassadors
- Scheduled Drop In Practice Opportunities
- Mindfulness Curriculum Inquiry Group (MCIG)

What is mindful awareness?



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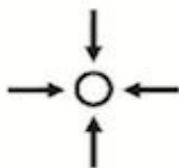
Kabat-Zinn: "Mindfulness is the awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment."

Mindfulness is a particular way of paying attention. The quality of attention is more important than the object of attention. Characteristics include intentionality, openness, and observation.

Mindfulness practices can be applied to any experience: sensations in the body, emotional experience, thoughts, sights or sounds.

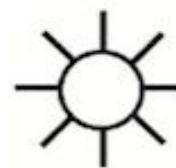
What is Mindful Awareness?

Three attentional skills working together:



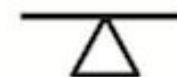
Concentration Power
(symbolized by arrows pointing to a focus object):

The ability to focus on what you want, when you want.



Sensory Clarity
(symbolized by light rays):

The ability to untangle the elements of sensory events.
Also the ability to detect sensory events that were previously subconscious.



Equanimity
(symbolized by a balance point):

The ability to let sensory experience come and go without push and pull.

How is Mindful Awareness Cultivated?

In the Basic Mindfulness System, mindful awareness is cultivated through three basic training strategies:



Noting

*(symbolized by the international
“laser light” icon):*

Track sensory events with or
without mental labels.

Do Nothing

*(symbolized by
the empty circle):*

Drop the intention
to control attention
(“Choiceless Awareness”,
“Open Presence”, etc.).

Nurture Positive

*(symbolized by
the heart):*

Intentionally create and maintain
Positive Mental Image,
Positive Mental Talk, and Pleasant
Emotional Body Sensations.

Introductions: **Mindful vs. Mindless**

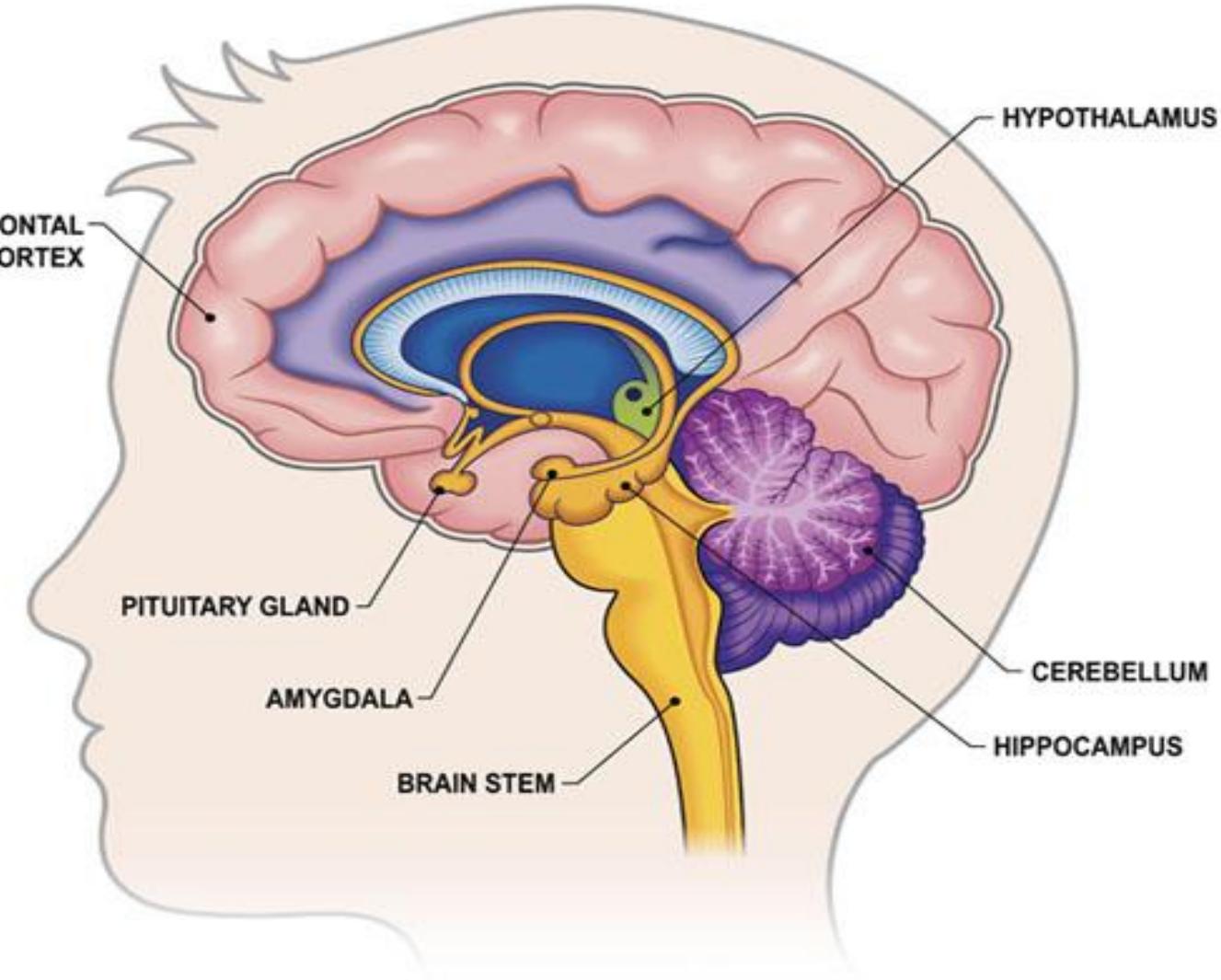
A photograph of a railway track that curves slightly to the right as it recedes into the distance. The track is made of brown steel rails and wooden sleepers, with dark grey gravel in the ballast. In the background, there are power lines and utility poles. The sky is a vibrant blue at the top, filled with large, white, billowing clouds that are backlit by the sun, creating a warm, golden glow. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and contemplative.

Practice 1: Breath Awareness and Thought Labeling

How does mindfulness work toward equity and social justice?

- Enhanced Meta-Awareness
- Decreased Stereotype Threat
- Cultivation of Kindness and Compassion
- Emotional Regulation
- Healing Embodied Life Trauma
- Development of Nonjudgmental Awareness; Understanding of Transiency of Thoughts, and Decrease in Self-Referential Processing

The Anatomy of the Brain



Meta-Awareness



Awareness of conditioning, bias, positionality

Increase
meta-awareness

Step 1

Increase awareness of
habitual tendencies
regarding thoughts,
emotions, behaviors

Step 2

Increase capacity to note
what is happening in
present moment and shift
attention

Step 3

Build capacity for
change

Rhonda Magee, 2012

“Domain-Specific Enhancement of Metacognitive Ability Following Meditation Training”

Benjamin Baird, Michael D. Mrazek, Dawa T. Phillips, and Jonathan W. Schooler, University of California, Santa Barbara, 2014

- Hypothesis: Mental training will increase metacognitive ability and strengthen PFC functioning and activity.
- Method: Participants engaged in challenging tasks and their confidence in correctness (awareness of that may be an error) was measured.
Mindfulness and Nutrition Interventions
- Result: Meta-awareness improved in meditation group.

“These findings provide the first evidence from a randomized controlled investigation that meditation training can directly influence the capacity to accurately reflect on cognitive tasks. Together, these data suggest that, in at least some domains, the human capacity to introspect is plastic and can be enhanced through training.”

Benjamin Baird, Michael D. Mrazek, Dawa T. Phillips, and Jonathan W. Schooler, University of California, Santa Barbara, 2014

Stereotype Threat

“Mindful Maths: Reducing the Impact of Stereotype Threat through a Mindfulness Exercise”

Ulrich W. Weger, Nic Hooper, Brian P. Meier,
Tim Hopthrow, Consciousness and Cognition,
2012

- Hypothesis: Short mindfulness practice will decrease stereotype threat due to impact on working memory, decrease in negative emotions, and attentional control.
- Method: Female groups in math test context with/without mindfulness intervention and activated/not activated stereotype threat were assessed.
- Result: Mindfulness group performed significantly better than control group.

“The fact that a simple 5 minute mindfulness exercise eliminated the typical stereotype threat effect holds considerable promise for the development of mindful-based strategies to reduce the detrimental effects of social threat.”

Ulrich W. Weger, Nic Hooper, Brian P. Meier, Tim Hopthrow, Consciousness and Cognition, 2012

Quick Write

A photograph of a railway track curving away into a sunset sky. The sky is filled with wispy, orange and white clouds against a deep blue background. The railway tracks are made of brown metal rails and wooden sleepers, with grey gravel between them. In the distance, there are some power poles and lines. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and contemplative.

Practice 2: Lovingkindness and Compassion Meditation

Loving Kindness and Compassion

"The Nondiscriminating Heart: Lovingkindness Meditation Training Decreases Implicit Intergroup Bias"

Yoona Kang, Jeremy Gray, and John Dovidio,
Journal of Experimental Psychology, 2013

- Hypothesis: Those who actively engage in lovingkindness meditation will show reduced bias in implicit attitudes toward Blacks and homeless people due to two mechanisms: increased cognitive control and decreased psychological stress.
- Method: Non-Black, non-homeless adults were randomly assigned to 1 of 3 conditions: 6-week lovingkindness practice, 6-week lovingkindness discussion, or waitlist control.
- Result: Lovingkindness meditation improved automatically activated, implicit attitudes toward stigmatized social groups and this effect occurred through distinctive mechanisms for different stigmatized social groups.

“The current research offers direct evidence that lovingkindness meditation can be used as a powerful tool not only for promoting personal health but also as an intervention for promoting healthy intergroup relations.”

Yoona Kang, Jeremy Gray, and John Dovidio, Journal of Experimental Psychology, 2013

Quick Write

Circle of Voices

The caged bird sings
with a fearful trill
of things unknown
but longed for still
and his tune is heard
on the distant hill
for the caged bird
sings of freedom.

Maya Angelou, “Caged Bird”

Resources

Courage of Care: Mission: To empower both personal and social transformation by providing deep contemplative training coupled with powerful tools for systemic change. Working to create a more courageous, caring and equitable world. Online course in [Undoing Oppression](#).

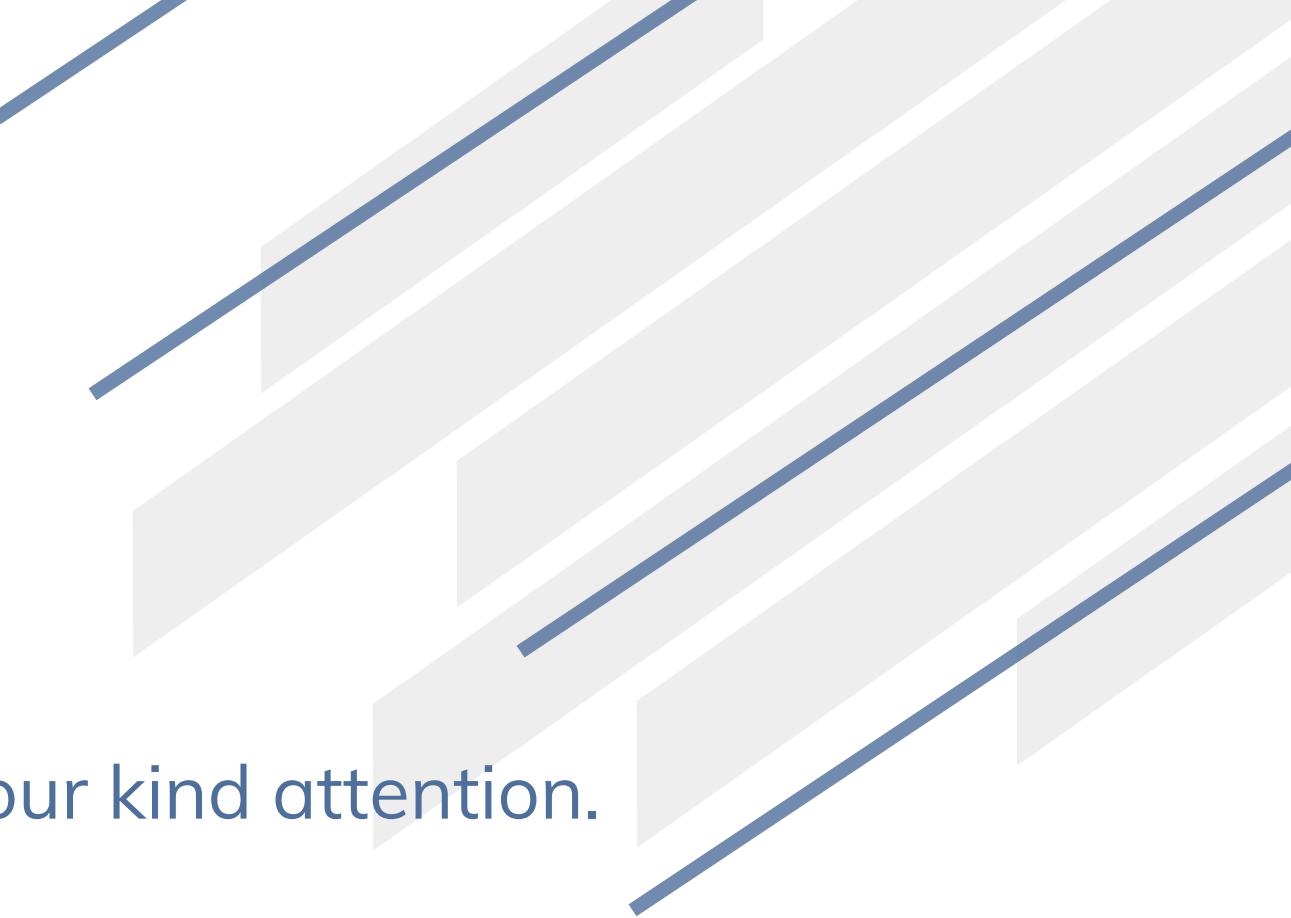
@One Course: [Equity & Culturally Responsive Teaching in the Online Learning Environment](#)

White Awake: White Awake addresses the particularities of white racial socialization with tools and resources that prioritizes spiritual practice, emotional process, compassion, and curiosity alongside historical analysis and intellectual rigor.

Contemplative Mind in Society: The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society (CMind) transforms higher education by supporting and encouraging the use of contemplative practices and perspectives to create active learning and research environments that look deeply into experience and meaning for all in service of a more just and compassionate society.



Questions? Please ask.



Thank you for your kind attention.